

Message Text

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ACTION MC-02

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 ACDA-05

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FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5256

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MILI, BE

SUBJECT: ILLICIT ARMS TRADE

REF: STATE 250418

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. FOLLOWING IS SYNTHESIS OF
PRESS REPORTS ON EXPOSURE OF ARMS CACHES IN
BASTOGNE AND LIEGE:

EXPLOSION TOOK PLACE AT 1100 OCT 13 IN ANNEX OF
HOUSE LOCATED AT 27 RUE DES REMPARTS IN BASTOGNE.
INITIAL EXPLOSION FOLLOWED BY SEVERAL SECONDARY
EXPLOSIONS. OCCUPANT OF HOUSE, JOSEPH DUTERME, 51,
WAS KILLED INSTANTLY. INVESTIGATION DETERMINED THAT
HE HAD BEEN TRYING TO REMOVE EXPLOSIVE CHARGE FROM
A SHELL. DISCOVERED AT EXPLOSION SITE WERE RIFLES,
AUTOMATIC RIFLES, ROCKETS, GRENADES, ARTILLERY AND
MORTAR SHELLS AND CASES OF SMALL ARMS AMMO.

POLICE, WHICH HAD HAD EXPLOSION SITE UNDER
OBSERVATION, IMMEDIATELY RAIDED APARTMENT AT
74 RUE DE KINKEMPOIS IN GUILLEMINS SECTION OF LIEGE.
THERE THEY DISCOVERED SECOND ARMS CACHE COMPOSED OF
30 SUBMACHINE GUNS, MILLS GRENADES, ONE AUTOMATIC RIFLE,
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THOUSANDS OF ROUNDS OF SMALL ARMS AMMO, ONE U.S.

M-1 RIFLE AND TEN EMPTY AUTOMATIC RIFLE CASES. POLICE ARRESTED AS THEY SHOWED UP SEPARATELY MRS. DENISE DENEFFE, 51, OCCUPANT OF APARTMENT, AND MISS CONCETTA DOLCIMASCOLO, 23. FORMER WAS DUTERME'S MISTRESS; LATTER WAS CARRYING 100 THOUSAND BF AND KEYS TO APARTMENT.

ANOTHER INDIVIDUAL IMPLICATED SAID TO BE "BRAINS" OF AFFAIR BUT NOT YET LOCATED IS ARNOLD HIGNY, 43, USED CAR DEALER AND BAR OPERATOR, PREVIOUSLY QUESTIONED BY POLICE ON SUSPICION OF USING COUNTERFEIT MONEY, FRAUD, ILLICIT ARMS TRAFFIC AND PROCURING. HIGNY, WHO CHARACTERIZED AS SMALL TIME CROOK, WAS FIRST IMPLICATED IN ILLICIT ARMS TRAFFIC OVER A YEAR AGO WHEN BELGIAN CUSTOMS STOPPED A FRENCHMAN OF BASQUE ORIGIN LIVING IN LIEGE AT BELGO-FRENCH BORDER CARRYING A LOAD OF EX-ISRAELI ARMY STEN GUNS, AMMO AND SPARE PARTS. ARMS HAD BEEN DEMILITARIZED BY ISRAELI ARMY AND HAD BEEN LEGALLY IMPORTED INTO BELGIUM. SAME ARMS HAD BEEN PREVIOUSLY SEIZED BY POLICE WHILE IN HIGNY'S POSSESSION, BUT HE HAD BEEN ABLE TO PROVE HIS LEGAL RIGHT TO THEM AND THEY HAD BEEN RETURNED TO HIM. HIGNY DISAPPEARED AT THAT TIME BUT IS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN IN TOUCH WITH DUTERME SINCE THEN. ALLEGATION HAS ALSO BEEN MADE THAT HIGNY WAS INVOLVED IN SOUTH TYROL EVENTS IN 1963. HE WAS SAID TO HAVE CONDUCTED TERRORIST OPERATIONS UNDER DIRECTION OF ALOIS AMPLATZ (ASSASSINATED IN 1964) IN ITALY, AND TO HAVE BEEN SEEN AT TRAINING CAMP NEAR SALZBURG. THIS IDENTIFICATION OF HIGNY IS SAID TO BE BASED ON FACT THAT HE HAS DEFORMED LEFT HAND (ABNORMALLY SMALL FINGERS), AND DID INDIVIDUAL SEEN BY GERMAN JOURNALIST IN 1963.

FURTHER ALLEGATIONS HAVE BEEN MADE THAT SUSPECTS WERE IN CONTACT WITH A MATHIAS MULLER, SUSPECTED OF HAVING STOLEN 80 KILOS OF TNT FROM POUDRERIES BELGES REUNIES NEAR MOL LAST JUNE.

PRESS SPECULATION THROUGHOUT AS AFFAIR DEVELOPED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WAS THAT SUSPECTS WERE NOT INVOLVED WITH TERRORIST ORGANIZATION, BUT WERE IN ARMS TRAFFIC STRICTLY FOR THE MONEY. POLICE HAVE STATED THAT EXPLOSION IN BASTOGNE PRECIPITATED ARRESTS, BUT THAT THOSE ARRESTED HAD BEEN UNDER SURVEILLANCE FOR OVER THREE MONTHS AND THAT POLICE WERE WAITING DELIVERY OF SEVERAL HUNDRED KILOS OF PLASTIC EXPLOSIVES TO THE SUSPECTS TO MAKE ARRESTS. END UNCLASSIFIED.

2. BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE. EMBASSY WILL
FOLLOW UP AND REPORT FURTHER DETAILS AS INFORMATION
DEVELOPES. FOR THE MOMENT THE CASE HAS DROPPED FROM
PUBLIC VIEW AS IT MOVES INTO JUDICIAL CHANNELS. FIRESTONE

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